

# REFUGEE

Arizona Refugee Resettlement Journal

## resettlement

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September 2006

### SUSTAINING A PROGRAM IN A PERIOD OF DIMINISHED ARRIVALS IS 2006 CHALLENGE

**D**uring the 2006 Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program (ARRP) Conference, Mark Franken, Executive Director of the U.S. Catholic Conference's Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS) took the podium several times. His keynote address went into depth about the relationships between his organization in the private sector and the public agencies. In his breakout sessions the attendees learned more about Franken's private journey and commitment to serve and to be an advocate for immigrants, refugees, migrants and people on the move.



Mark F

In a recent follow-up conversation, Franken was asked what his biggest challenge is for the remainder of 2006. "Sustaining a program in a period of diminished arrivals" was his answer. Franken went on to explain arrival numbers have been dramatically reduced under the U.S. Patriot Act and the Real ID Act because the definitions and explanations of the laws are far too broad to work efficiently. Defining how a refugee qualifies under what circumstances is continually presenting a "Catch 22." For

example, according to Franken, "If a Burmese farmer gives food to local guerrillas in order to protect his family, he is considered to have given material support to a terrorist. The moral question is, did he do this out of self-defense to protect his family, or was he truly acting on behalf of the terrorist group in question." According to the new laws, this man would be considered a terrorist and would not be allowed into the United States.

Franken stated that the laws are too broadly worded. The interpretation is solely left in the hands of the Homeland Security Agency. With terrorism at its current level, very little movement on behalf of the refugee seems to be prevalent.

This year's Presidential Determination authorizes the admission of 60,000 refugees into the United States by world regions. It appears, however, at the very most, 40,000 refugees will be admitted to the U.S. In the meantime, USCCB/MRS, in partnership with more than 100 diocesan refugee resettlement offices which are typically part of Catholic Charities agencies, will continue to search for innovative and cost-effective approaches to helping refugees rebuild their lives.

For more information on the U.S. Catholic Conference programs, please visit: [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org). ■

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### COMPELLING INFORMATION SHARE AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

**J**amal Al-Fakhouri and Robin Dunn Marcos, both International Rescue Committee (IRC) Regional Directors had the opportunity to attend the Annual Resettlement Directors Conference this past June in Salt Lake City, Utah. The keynote speaker for the conference was Ellen Sauerbrey, Asst. Secretary of State for

Population, Refugees, and Migration. Both Directors felt Sauerbrey touched on significant and timely issues and wanted to share her information with readers of this *Journal*. The following is an overview of the information she shared.

Sauerbrey opened her remarks by expressing how seriously her department and everyone associated with it considers the word "International" in the IRC.

Her office interacts and depends on the IRC to provide lifesaving aid and support to help reunite

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# FROM THE STATE REFUGEE COORDINATOR

Dear Friends,

In our efforts to provide education about refugee resettlement, we typically cite that it supports U.S. foreign policy and humanitarian concerns and that it is an important tool of protection in global humanitarian relief efforts. Understanding this versatility of our nation's refugee resettlement program sheds some light on why it is more complicated to explain than most of us in this work would like. We prefer to have refugees speak about their personal experiences as a way of emphasizing the need for refugee rescue and relief because that is more compelling than recitations of the complex bureaucracy under which refugee resettlement operates.

There are times, however, when it is important to understand the policies that govern our nation's refugee resettlement program. For example, it is relevant to know that refugee resettlement occurs not only because people are persecuted, but also because the other options (repatriation or integration into the country of first asylum) are not possible. The U.S. and other resettlement countries must weigh the impact of global unrest on refugees and the potential of destabilizing regions that are of national interest.

This edition of the *Journal* offers some information about national deliberation over some very complicated policy issues of significant consequence to refugees along with stories about efforts to help ease the burden of transition for refugees in Arizona. I hope that as you read all the articles you will bear in mind that refugee resettlement is, most importantly, a tool of protection for the victims of human atrocities.

Warmly,



Charles Shipman  
State Refugee Coordinator  
Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program ■



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# LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRY OF THE SOUTHWEST'S SUMMER ACTION

Throughout Phoenix and Tucson, Lutheran Social Ministry of the Southwest (LSMS) works around the clock to provide a complete and comprehensive resettlement program. The LSMS resettlement program starts the minute the refugees step off of the plane at the airport. Immediate human

connection between the refugee and an LSMS representative can be the deciding factor between stress and fear or safety and hope.

Collaborative efforts on the part of the Phoenix Immigration Team help newly arrived refugees and their families adapt to their new surroundings. The team's focus is centered on the rising numbers of cases being processed through the Phoenix Multicultural Services offices. The increase in family reunification through LSMS's

*Eleven-year-old refugee Amina Ali is welcomed by Elaine Hull.*

continuing efforts helps to solidify a healthy refugee program for years to come.

## LSMS NATIONAL CONCERNS

Though the local office of the LSMS holds true to form in achieving its goals for 2006, Resettlement Director Craig Thoresen has some concerns. The U.S. Patriot Act and the Real ID Act most assuredly will have an impact on the local levels according to Thoresen. Just the wording alone concerning "Victims of Interpretation" leaves many open-ended questions. While the laws are being debated on the national level,



*The LSMS delivery truck has made a great impact on their ability to resettle the many families who are a part of the LSMS comprehensive resettlement program. The next goal is to get their name painted on it.*

there are still thousands of refugees who have been cleared for entry into the United States but their departure dates have been put on hold.

Thoresen noted that the arrivals of refugees sponsored by LSMS have continued to slow down. His agencies are ready to go into action on behalf of the arriving refugees

but have to deal with the continued delays resulting from current implementation of the laws. While waiting for redress of the unintended consequences of the laws, LSMS will continue to work closely with family anchors, church co-sponsors and community groups to make as many resources available to those refugees who have been admitted for resettlement.

When asked how the concerned refugee advocate can help, he suggested writing, emailing, or calling our representatives and congressmen in Washington D.C. Continued communication with those who make the laws might somehow, finally, have an impact on releasing the legitimate refugees who have been waiting to come to their new homes in the United States. ■

*LSMS photos by Donna Buckles, LSMS Church Sponsorship Developer.*



*The Abdikerim family were welcomed to America by representatives from Gloria Dei Lutheran Church.*



*As soon as Ismahan Hagi and her daughter Sabreena arrived at the airport, LSMS volunteers and members of the Mission del Sol Presbyterian Church were on hand to welcome them.*



## WELCOME TO AMERICA PROJECT

# FURNISHING HOUSEHOLDS FOR REFUGEES

She has focus and drive, but most of all she has the unwavering passion to make sure no refugee coming to the metropolitan Phoenix Valley feels unwelcome. She is Caroline Manning.

On September 11, 2001, Manning's family received word



*Teenagers form a long line as they carry in much-needed items for identified refugee families.*

also a time for empathy and a time to stop to think about the millions of people around the world who live their daily lives going from one tragedy to another.

Manning decided to take action and founded the Welcome To America Project (WTAP) with one thing in mind. To make sure refugees who relocate to metropolitan Phoenix enjoy the basic human rights of belonging and feeling safe. However, feeling safe and belonging is one thing but the material items it takes for just one human being to exist on a day to day basis is another. Thus the mobilization of the WTAP came into being.

Their mission statement is clear and concise: "We believe in the goodness of humanity and in the basic human right of each person to feel that they belong. We work to bring a message of welcoming and belonging to refugees arriving in the U.S."



*New refugees gather with WTAP volunteers after a long morning of turning a house into a home.*

The WTAP is a not for profit organization and relies solely on donations of clothing, furniture and household goods. These goods are distributed to refugees in the area who may actually arrive with no more than the clothes on their backs.

As Americans, we often times walk through each room of our home, our pantries are full, our closets are filled with clothes, we barely notice what it takes to furnish and maintain this environment. To the refugee who has spent years in a refugee camp, a furnished room and



*Even a basketball becomes an important home furnishing when you're just a little guy.*

a roof over their head is indescribable.



*A WTAP volunteer delivers a picture to decorate the home of a newly arrived refugee family.*

Caroline's garage became the first storage facility for the donated goods. However, not too long into the project, it became evident that a larger facility was needed. Soon a delivery truck and more volunteers became necessary. When asked by other refugee related organizations for help with household goods, Caroline and her volunteers are the first to step up to the plate. Since November of 2001, the WTAP has gathered and delivered donated goods to 220 plus refugee families, raised over \$100,000 in-kind donations, and logged over 2,000 volunteer hours.

Refugees find the WTAP mostly through other agencies that are involved with refugee assistance. Information about the WTAP also spreads from one refugee to another. Once the WTAP is informed of the refugee's needs, the items are scheduled for delivery.

The question was asked if the cutback allowing refugees to resettle in the U.S. has affected the WTAP. Caroline's answer was an unequivocal, "Absolutely not. If anything, we need to step up the influx of donations in order to get to all of the refugee families in need." She also stated that during the remainder of 2006 she is excited about the opportunity to network with the local VOLAGs (Volunteer Agencies). In turn, city-wide agencies involved in refugee rescue programs reach

# FILLS MANY NEEDS

out to Manning's organization for assistance with their needs. This is truly a case of one organization helping another.

In order for the WTAP to keep assisting the recently resettled refugees, several things have to happen in the near future. The recently acquired box truck that is vital to increasing the delivery range is in dire need of new brakes. The WTAP is asking for support in the way of mechanical assistance and monetary donations for the day-to-day cost of keeping the doors open. Gas, insurance expenses which run approximately \$3,500 per year and storage fees for the donations are ongoing concerns.

Efforts to welcome and help as many refugees as possible is ongoing. A large majority of the refugees served by WTAP ultimately become highly motivated U.S. citizens. Refugees who are touched by WTAP learn to trust, live free and make their own life-style decisions.

September 11, 2001 was a day of "In Your Face Reality." It was a day of sorrow but also a day for reflecting on just how lucky we are to live in the United States. Manning, her family

and close friends continue to carry on this message to each refugee who is part of the Welcome To America Project. ■



*A WTAP volunteer visits with a young refugee as household necessities are delivered.*

# STUDENT ORGANIZATION FOUNDED FOR REFUGEE ADVOCACY

One of the growing "not for profit" organizations to watch in Arizona is a very motivated and goal oriented student run organization known as Community Outreach & Advocacy For Refugees (COAR). The organization was originally founded in 2002 by Cambodian refugee, Sambo Dul. At the time Dul was a student at ASU. Her experiences of settling into a new lifestyle and university were the inspiration that put the stepping-stones in place.

Early this summer a new Executive Director, Cara Steiner, was named and Vahid Dejwakh was elected as the Business Manager of COAR. Dejwakh is also a student at ASU. While the day-to-day management role takes considerable amount of time, Dejwakh is still finding the time to finish his BA degree in religious studies.



*Cara Steiner, COAR Executive Director, takes time to play with Moktar Abdi Idle, a Somali Bantu refugee.*

## REACHING OUT

The true focus of COAR is advocacy, advocacy focused on the newly arrived refugee students and their families. Volunteers are trained to identify the immediate as well as the long-term needs of each refugee being assisted. Over the past several years, the

leaders of COAR have been able to collaborate with other local agencies that can provide crossover assistance.

COAR volunteers meet with the refugees and their families on a regular basis. They are trained to evaluate and assess the immediate and extended needs of each refugee. Daily needs including grocery shopping to translation are met through the volunteers' efforts.

COAR is still managed by ASU students, but has most assuredly taken on a more corporate persona. The official designation of COAR as a not for profit organization became official in 2005.

To find more information about COAR, please call (480) 727-0909. ■



*ASU students spent the night in tents on Hayden lawn as they participated in a mock experience of being a refugee. Students tried to find displaced members of their families, and slept in tents made of miscellaneous pieces of provided materials.*

*Photos courtesy of the Arizona Republic.*

# SAUERBREY ADDRESSES IRC DIRECTORS

*continued from page 1*

shattered communities and families who have been separated in war-torn or poverty-stricken countries. She acknowledged that many livelihoods of the refugees can be and are restored through the joint efforts of the IRC and the U.S. Department of State.

She went on to address the subject of sexual exploitation of children and refugees and how it stretches around the globe. The IRC is working hard to raise social awareness and has become a leader in this educational process. They continue to prove themselves to be leaders in developing the tools for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. This type of dedication has been a vital contribution to raising the professional standards in humanitarian protection and assistance.

Accomplishing a united goal depends on the complete partnering of the government and international organizations on various levels. Sauerbrey noted that conferences like this Annual Resettlement Conference are instrumental in the initial introductions and partnering of the international and non-governmental organizations.

Relatively new to her State Department position, Sauerbrey changed direction at this point to detail her work responsibilities with the Bureau as it relates to population, refugees and migration.

Since joining the Bureau she has traveled extensively both domestically and internationally. The goal was to broaden her understanding of refugee programs. Her department has partnered with the IRC overseas in an effort to further protect and assist refugees. Earlier in the year Sauerbrey was impressed by the work being done by the IRC in the Kakuma Camp in Kenya on behalf of refugee health issues. During her tour she was able to see first-hand important success including additional latrines to reduce the incidences of cholera, the spraying campaign and mosquito nets to protect refugees from malaria, and the new 120-bed hospital.

Sauerbrey's department also partners with organizations to provide the necessary support for returning populations to help them rebuild their lives. She highlighted the work being done in Southern Sudan with the help of the IRC, explaining that often a refugee family is not able to re-start their lives in the country of their origin. At this point another country has to be willing to open up and offer a new start to the refugees.

Education is one of Sauerbrey's top priorities at the Bureau. Her office has been working closely with the

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to explore ways of including refugee children as beneficiaries of President Bush's Africa Education Initiative. Also in the infancy stage is distance learning thus enhancing the educational and economic opportunities.

Sauerbrey categorized the next topic as "Things they didn't tell you about when you took the job." One of her biggest issues has become the topic of "material support" and the challenge of assuring that terrorism-related exclusion provisions in the law do not deny victims of terror, conflict and repression needed protection and sanctuary.

Simply put, a Somali woman can be fearful for her family's life because of militant action in her village.

One of the militant soldiers asks for a bowl of rice. She may give him the rice to protect her family, however, this could also be viewed as being sympathetic towards the enemy. If there is proof she gave the rice because of her loyalty to the militant group, she will not be allowed in to the United States. Even if there is only a vague suspicion of her supporting the same soldiers, she will still be denied entry. The exact verbiage of who qualifies for refugee assistance is still being debated in Washington D.C.

Until there are major changes in the Homeland Security laws, material support will continue to challenge the Refugee Admissions Program. In many

instances these laws bring the caseloads to a near halt. The countries that are directly affected include Colombia, Liberia, Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Cuba and Vietnam, as well as all the ethnicities from Burma. This has created a dramatic impact on the resettlement programs in nearly every location where they are processed.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently exercised her authority to waive the material support ineligibility for certain refugees including the Karen from Burma in the Tham Hin camp in Thailand. Sauerbrey stated, "To this end, our offices are working around the clock to step up the processing of the Tham Hin Camp in Thailand."

In her closing remarks Sauerbrey shared, "We are continuing to work within the Administration to develop a long-term and comprehensive approach consistent with national security concerns that allow us to deal with refugee populations in a manner consistent with U.S. government foreign policy interest. I am very proud of the work that the United States is doing to increase hope, human rights and fundamental freedoms." ■

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# UPDATE OF CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA'S EFFORTS

Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona continues to move forward, reaching countless refugees and their families by linking into other programs in the Tucson area. Working together with other agencies and programs furthers the benefits offered to the resettlement of Southern Arizona refugees.



Most recently the Pio Decimo Center has been added to CCS group of affiliates. The Pio Decimo Center is an important partner of CCS because it provides a safe environment that promotes respect

and dignity for newly arrived refugees. The children's program serves as a vital element in their lives by providing the nurturing and security a child needs in order to adapt to a completely new lifestyle.

A recent acquisition to CCS is a new transport van. By coordinating schedules with the Pio Decimo Center, CCS is able to provide safe transportation for refugee children and their families to the center. Working together, agency to agency, ensures that potential latch key kids have a place to learn and grow throughout the summer months.

Dr. Ron Dankowski, Executive Director of CCS, continues to see steady growth in his organization. In 2006 CCS will receive approximately 75 refugees. Most of the refugees will be from Somalia and other African countries. Shortly after the refugees are settled in, CCS starts working with the adult refugees in order to find them jobs. Refugees seeking employment receive counseling to determine job qualifications, translation if needed during interviews and transportation to the interview site. Once the employment is secured, there is ongoing assistance.

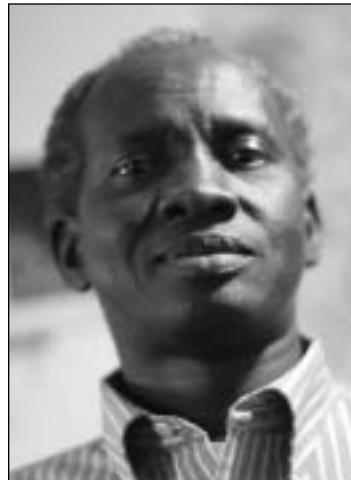


Counseling and orientation following the securing of employment, industry-specific English classes, transportation assistance, plus the purchase of workplace-specific clothing are all examples of the extended services CCS extends to refugees. This well-formulated employment program is responsible for a 90 percent job placement rate for newly arrived refugees.

When asked if the national laws that have recently been passed in relation to refugees entering the United States have affected the flow and growth of CCS, Dankowski's reply was, "We continue to see steady growth in the Southwest."

Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona strives to better its programs each year. With the continued efforts of Dankowski, his staff and partnered agencies, several hundred refugees will continue to prosper, grow and lead productive lives.

If you would like more information, please go to: [www.ccs-soaz.org](http://www.ccs-soaz.org) ■



*The photos of refugees on this page are served by Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona and were taken by Jay Rochlin.*

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## CATHOLIC CHARITIES, PHOENIX REGION WELCOME, HONOR REFUGEES

### ANNUAL REFUGEE APPRECIATION DINNER AND FASHION SHOW

In the Phoenix Region, Catholic Charities continues to be a driving force in expediting the resettlement of newly arrived refugees. June 10, 2006, the organization hosted their annual dinner and fashion show event to honor and welcome the refugees from around the world who now call Phoenix their home. The attendees were entertained with a fashion show that featured international attire, and singers representing Cuba, Afghanistan, Russia, Europe and Africa.

Proceeds of the appreciation dinner will benefit the Catholic Charities Refugee Matching Grant Program. This

is a significant funding program where each dollar donated is matched by \$2 from the Federal Government. The funds from the Matching Grant

Program ultimately help refugees find jobs. Matching Grant is an voluntary expedited self-sufficiency program and participants receive no public cash assistance.

### CATHOLIC CHARITIES, PHOENIX REGION AT WORK

Public awareness of the refugee community in Phoenix is an ongoing issue. Defining to the public the true definition of a refugee and their needs is a main focal point. Catholic Charities is a very good example of employment and social exchanges to make the refugees' transition as easy as possible. Through their continuing guidance, the majority of the refugees retain their employment and become responsible citizens. The

timeless efforts of Catholic Charities, Phoenix Region bring hope and happiness to refugees.

If you would like more information, visit Catholic Charities' website at [www.cc-az.org](http://www.cc-az.org). ■

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